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FENBYN CLIFFORD'S MYSTERIOUS NURSE.

THE ENGLISHMAN IN RUSSIA.

A TALE OF THE TIME OF CATHERINE II.

CHAPTER XLIX.—INKERMANN.

CLIFFORD awoke in the morning from troubled dreams and unrefreshing slumbers, to a sense of
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his precarious condition, and to the recollection of the terrible events of the preceding day. With regard to these, indeed, he was unaware of the full and exterminating vengeance taken on the unfortunate Russian soldiers by the savage band

into whose hands he had fallen, and whose hospitality and care he was now experiencing; but he had witnessed the effects of their first murderous volley, and he knew enough of the nature of the warfare which was carried on between the Russian troops and the rebel Tartars, to be assured that little mercy was to be expected for such of the routed lancers as had fallen into their hands. And, without attempting to palliate or excuse this cold-blooded extermination—judging it to have been accomplished—Clifford was not ignorant of the fact that the Russian army in general had, by its merciless proceedings, provoked the wildest and most ungovernable passions of human nature, in the breasts of the unhappy natives of the land.

Then, in turning his thoughts to his own situation, he saw little to inspire him. His wound was probably mortal: he felt, at least, that his strength was absolutely gone: his pain was intense: the bullet that had entered his side was lodged deep in his body, perhaps in some vital part: he remembered that the Tartar surgeon—if he were a surgeon—who examined his wound on the preceding night, had shaken his head gravely when he inserted his finger in the orifice the bullet had made; and from that shake of the head the wounded man had augured badly. Moreover, his crushed limb was fearfully swollen and inflamed, and intensely painful; while the fever which had ensued, and had rapidly gathered strength through the night, was parching his throat and mouth with horrible thirst.

All these symptoms and circumstances would have been sufficiently depressing, if the sufferer had been lying in his own chamber in his uncle's house, and enjoying all the attentions which skill and affection and ample resources combined could procure or suggest: how much more depressing, then, when he knew himself to be at the mercy of a horde of rude and savage men, whose hatred of foreign intruders had been raised to the extremest pitch of fanaticism; and when his only friend, and he to whom he owed his temporary safety, was probably the greatest criminal of the entire band?

And what would they do with him, if death did not speedily end his sufferings? From some few words which he had imperfectly heard, as well as from the appearance of everything around, it was plain that the cavern was a mere temporary resting-place, and that his captors were hurrying on to some distant spot. Would they convey him with them? or would they leave him to perish and die alone in his helplessness? Either alternative was dreadful to contemplate, especially the first; for, strange as it may seem, the wounded man would, in that hour, have preferred the certainty of death in solitude, to the dreadful sufferings to which he would be exposed by the softest, gentlest motion of his former mode of conveyance.

These reflections were interrupted by the rising of one after another of the warlike band from their lairs, among whom was the man who had acted as surgeon, and who again approached the couch on which Clifford lay, and, by the morning light, which streamed in from several openings near the roof of the cavern, and which seemed to have been artificially made, re-examined the condition of the patient.

Evidently, this time, the result was unsatisfactory; and apparently, also, the Tartar physician had exhausted the resources of his skill; at any rate, he prescribed nothing more than copious draughts of the same cooling fluid which had previously allayed the patient's thirst, and which the Russian deserter, Paul, was at hand to administer. And then, for several hours, Clifford sunk into a stupor, from which he was only occasionally and partially roused by the sensation of bodily pain.

Meanwhile, the Tartars themselves were in grave perplexity; and we may so far depart from the onward current of our personal narrative as to throw a glimmering of light upon the sanguinary events of the preceding day.

From information which had reached the Russian camp, its General had reason to believe that a large body of insurgent Tartars, under the rival khan Selim, and increased and strengthened by bands of warriors from Circassia, had gathered in the mountainous regions of the southern coast of the peninsula, and was preparing for a sweeping descent upon the royal city and the Russian camp. Alive to the danger of a sudden surprise from such a quarter, Suwarrow had despatched the Polish officer with his score of lancers, to reconnoitre the country in that direction, and obtain more certain information of the movements of the enemy. Unhappily for the success of this expedition, a well-armed band of several score of Tartars were advancing by a circuitous route to join this rendezvous; and the eagle eye of a nimble scout of that band had discerned the mounted party ere they had traversed the pleasant valley of the Belbec.

The object of the lancers was easily divined by the leader of the Tartar band; and to hasten onward and place themselves in ambush in the last and most dangerous defile of the mountains was the obvious plan of the Tartars, whose thirst for vengeance on the Russians had been intensely excited by numerous instances of severity, not to say needless cruelty, they had witnessed and even experienced at their hands.

The fatal result of the ambuscade, the reader already knows: and after thus satiating their fury, the Tartars had partially dispersed; the larger portion of the band departing eastward towards the real gathering-place of the rebel army, of which they were better informed than the Russian General, and the smaller detachment—in whose charge the wounded prisoner was placed—leaving behind them the mountains, and striking across the valley of Achtkjar, to a temporary refuge in one of the numerous caverns of Inkermann.

How far their compassion for the wounded captive dictated this movement it is not for us to say; and it would perhaps be scarcely generous to attribute the consideration Clifford had experienced to mercenary motives; yet may we suggest, that among the inducements urged by Paul for sparing the life of his former benefactor, was a hint that a large ransom might thereafter be forthcoming for his liberty, and great rewards for kindness shown.

But Clifford's increasing illness evidently threw his captors out of their calculations. They could not remove him without inconveniently and per-

haps dangerously clogging their own movements; and they could not leave him behind without incurring the shame and disgrace of inhospitality. Twenty-four hours earlier, not one of them would have hesitated to plunge a dagger into his heart—a fate, indeed, which he had narrowly escaped; but now that he had eaten of their salt, and was under their protection, not only his life, but his safety and comfort, were to be considered sacred.

Through the day, therefore, though in hazardous proximity to the Russian army—whose General could not long remain ignorant of the recent massacre, and whose promptitude to avenge it could as little be doubted—the small Tartar band remained inactive in their hiding-place, contenting themselves with sending out scouts in the direction from which danger was most to be apprehended; and it was not until evening that these scouts returned with assurances that, for the present, no suspicious movements of the enemy necessitated instant and rapid retreat.

Meanwhile the condition of Penrhyn Clifford had become more precarious; fever had advanced to delirium; and only the watchful and soothing care of his attendant, the grateful Russian, in those momentary paroxysms of nervous or muscular power which sometimes intermits with the apparently general and entire prostration of healthful bodily strength, had restrained him from such convulsive throes of desperate violence as might have proved fatal.

The morning of the second day brought intelligence to the refugees of the cavern, startling if not interesting. News of the slaughter of the detachment of lancers had evidently reached the Russian camp, which was in lively commotion, while Suwarrow, half beside himself with rage, was advancing, at the head of a strong division of the army, to avenge the sanguinary and treacherous deed. This report was brought by a Tartar, mounted on a fleet horse, hot and breathless with haste, who urged his countrymen to immediate flight.

No time was lost in preparations. The hurdle for the wounded prisoner was again put into requisition; and Clifford being lifted upon it, once more commenced his painful journey, while yet in a state of fevered insensibility. In a few minutes from the alarm being given, the cavern was deserted.

Of little avail, however, would have been the prompt action of the fugitives, if, on arriving at the scene of slaughter, the impetuous Russian General had not followed in the track of the larger band of Tartar rebels; for so rapid were his movements, in his eagerness for vengeance on the murderers, that though they were at first two days in advance of their pursuers, they were overtaken on the evening of the fourth day, and mercilessly destroyed. It was by actions of such sudden and swift retaliation on the enemies of his sovereign, that Suwarrow became a terror in the Crimea, and he obtained the name to which we have already referred, and in which he gloried, that of "Catherine's avenging scourge."

CHAPTER L.

MYSTERIOUS HOSPITALITY.

WHEN Penrhyn Clifford once more returned to consciousness—opening his eyes from a long and

refreshing slumber—he found himself stretched on a comfortable bed, in a partially darkened apartment. Curtains were drawn around his head, he was undressed, and between clean and fragrant sheets of snowy linen, and covered with a quilt of many gay colours. His pain was gone; and, but for a sense of utter prostration of strength, and the extreme tenuity of his body and limbs, which greatly surprised and alarmed him, he might have fancied for a moment that the events of the last few months of his life, which began to crowd in upon his memory, had been a fantastic dream, and that he had never left the shores of his native land, but had been dropped, by some extraordinary and unaccountable means, into the cozy chamber of an English farmhouse.

The sounds which first met his ear and attracted his wondering attention would have strengthened such an imagination. It was early morning; and while the merry sunbeams darted in at the window in tiny streaks through the chinks of its drawn blinds, he plainly heard from without, but in near proximity with the mysterious dwelling in which he found himself, the crowing of cocks, the screeching of hens, the clattering of innumerable sparrows, the lowing of cows, the bleating of sheep, and the voices of human kind.

Raising himself on his elbow with an amazing effort, and drawing aside the bed-curtain, he obtained a view of the apartment, which would still further have confirmed such a conviction. Its ceiling and walls were whitewashed and delicately clean; the floor was covered with matting; on the walls were several pictures in frames, much like such as he remembered to have seen in olden times in the aforesaid English farmhouse, being rough engravings, gaily painted in water colours, and framed and glazed, representing the Adoration of the Shepherds at Bethlehem, the Flight into Egypt, and one or two other scripture subjects. By the bedside was a small table, covered with a clean white napkin (English farmhouse style again, to the very pattern of the diaper), and on it were a jug, a glass, and a book or two. The jug and glass looked inviting, and with another amazing effort the bewildered patient—for he supposed he must be somebody's patient, but he was not sure; he was sure of nothing just then—reached the handle of the jug, and tremblingly poured out some of its contents into the glass. Clear and sparkling! He lifted it to his mouth, taking immense precautions not to spill the liquid on the clean sheets, lest he should be scolded for his carelessness by the somebody whose patient he must be and was, and drank and drank till it had all disappeared. It was very nice, whoever put it there. Thanks, good somebody.

The books next—what could they be? Perhaps they might explain. He put his hand upon the little one first. Strange and wonderful! On the blank leaf was his own name, "Penrhyn Clifford." Not so strange, either; for it was his own pocket Testament; but how it got there, and how Penrhyn Clifford got here! There was something strange in that.

Would the other book explain? Whose name should he find in that? Not —; no, certainly not; no name that he knew or that you know either, dear reader—"Johan und Gertrude Müller."

This puzzled Clifford; and neither the title of the book, "*Christliche Oden und Lieder*," nor its contents, which were those of a hymn-book in German, could solve the riddle. Satisfied, however, that he must somehow have got into good hands, he fell back on his pillow and dozed off again.

Not so soundly, however, that he was not dreamily conscious—without raising his eyelids, which he had not the power to do till it was too late—of the gentle lifting of the doorlatch and the opening of the door, and the gliding into the room of soft footsteps, and the quiet breathing of somebody—the mysterious somebody, no doubt—by his bedside. He fancied also that he heard a very low and subdued exclamation of satisfaction from somebody's lips; but before he had discovered that he really could open his eyes, the vision had departed, and he was again alone.

He dozed again very deliciously, and then again he was roused. This time it was the sound of voices from some distant apartment, in musical tones. Somebody, and more somebodies than one, were singing. There was a deep bass voice, and a charming treble, and a full tenor; there might be more—there were certainly these. Clifford would have given something if he could have made out the words. Hark! listen! he catches the strain, and slowly, line by line, the words which he feels must be sung to it, arrange themselves in his memory. A translation must suffice for us:—

"God is our refuge and defence,
Our shield his dread Omnipotence:
Earth may beneath us shrink;
The ancient mountains hoar
Down in the deep tide sink:
Let the wild deluge roar!
Jehovah is our Refuge and Defence.

"There is a river, calm and pure,
Whose streams refresh and well secure
The dwelling-place of God:
Blest city, fair and bright,
His favoured saints' abode,
Where the Lord reigns in light:
No foe can shake his strong foundations sure.

"God is our refuge and our shield,
What then can make us fear or yield?
Wars at his bidding cease;
He breaks the bow and spear,
He reigns in truth and peace:
Let all adore and fear
Our God and Saviour, Israel's Hope and Shield."

The music ceased, and Clifford, now more thoroughly aroused, as well as gently soothed by the association of ideas it had produced, began to arrange in his mind, as well as he was able, the feeble and uncertain recollections which might account for his present strange though comfortable lodgment. He had no difficulty in bringing back to his memory the onslaught in the mountains and the grateful kindness of the Russian deserter; and he shuddered when he thought of the sudden destruction which had fallen on the Russian soldiers and their young commander, and how near their fate had been his own. He remembered the cavern, too, and the dreadful pain he had endured until—

Until when? Here began his puzzling inquiries. As you, reader, in the course of your experience, may have revived in your dim remembrance the shadowy features of some horrible night-

dream, in which you have endured incalculable agonies without a knowledge of their cause, so did Clifford bring back to his mind the faint but intensely painful impressions of the past. There was the sudden removal from the cavern on to his hand-carriage, and the piercing sufferings caused by the motion; there was a swift transit through a deep valley, with an occasional change of bearers, while by his side, or flitting to and fro, were the wild and savage figures of his captors, looking pityingly on him nevertheless. Then the scene changed—how long afterwards he could not conjecture—to a narrow and rugged pathway up a steep mountain's side, which seemed to his disordered imagination to reach higher than the clouds, and which was clothed to the very top with trees, surpassing in verdure all that he had ever seen before; then hurrying on, panting, resting, hurrying on again, were the same savage forms and countenances, always changing, yet always the same; then a blank. Were they hours, or days, or weeks climbing up that great mountain? He did not know. It seemed but yesterday, and yet it might be years ago; he could not tell. Then they reached the mountain top; thirst— parching, feverish, horrible thirst—consumed him; and those strange, savage men gave him drink from the bottles slung at their sides. Then, down, down; a glorious valley lay before him, bathed in sunshine—verdant, beautiful, glorious; his senses were drinking in its glowing delights when—

O! that moment, never to be thought of but with a shudder, and with perspiration bursting from every pore at the bare remembrance of the agony which shot through every nerve and fibre of the bruised and wounded body, when one of his bearers stumbled and fell! Darkness crept over him after that, and blessed oblivion.

So absorbed was Penrhyn Clifford with this wearying exercise of mind and memory, that it was not till he felt a cool soft hand laid on his forehead that he knew he was not alone, and looked up.

Looked up into the honest, kindly countenance of a motherly dame, neat as a Quakeress, and with somewhat of a Quakeress garb on her plump, well-nurtured person. This was the *somebody*, then, who had taken such care of him, and about whom he had been so puzzled—Gertrude Muller, of course; and, seeing her so near him and so unexpectedly too, Clifford could not help smiling as upon an old acquaintance.

Gertrude smiled too.

This was satisfactory—satisfactory also that Gertrude Muller was such a matronly, motherly, nursely body—he would not have had her a year younger; so Clifford not only smiled, but put his thin, shrunken hand into her fat—well, it was fat—into her fat palm.

She took it as frankly as he offered it; and then, just as a mother might have done, she stooped down and kissed his pale cheek, and then she sat down by the bedside, all in dumb show.

"Gertrude wants me to speak first," thought Clifford to himself; "quite proper; so let me try." He did not know how feeble his voice was, though, till he tried; but he uttered a few words of thanks—in German, of course.

Gertrude did not stay till he had finished

Really it was wonderful how so portly a body could move so quickly; but in a moment she was off the chair, on to the floor, out of the room, and the next minute Clifford heard her voice—it was a very pleasant one—the treble voice of the morning hymn, no doubt, crying in some distant passage—

"Johan, Johan, dear Johan! the poor younker has come to himself, Johan, and he talks with our father-land tongue!"

CHAPTER LI.

JOHAN MULLER.

AND, of course, Johan Muller hearkened to the voice of his Eve, and came to look at the prodigy. He was a grave, big man, with a solemn but gentle countenance, plainly dressed in a somewhat peculiar fashion. It is superfluous to add, that when he addressed our young friend it was in the language of "father-land."

"Do not attempt to rise, I pray thee; do not move, except for thine own convenience; do not speak, unless thou pleasest," were Johan Muller's first injunctions, as he stood by Clifford's bedside, stooping to insert his large head under the upper framework of the bedstead, and at the same time laying his finger on the pulse of his guest.

Clifford obeyed, and was thankful for the command or permission to be silent; for he really felt too feeble to speak, and the exercises of his mind during the last hour had been exhausting. He looked inquiringly and anxiously, however, into the face of his host.

"Thou wilt do well, now," said Muller, in response to the look. "Thou hast, nevertheless, had a marvellous deliverance. Canst thou thank the Almighty for his mercy?"

"I do thank him that my life has been spared," whispered the young Englishman.

"That is well; think on him, then, in silent meditation, and prayer, and thanksgiving. We will speak more fully at another time; for I see thou art curious to know where thou art. Meanwhile, it will be well for thee to take some nourishment, and here cometh my Gertrude with viands. Thou canst eat?"

Clifford had little doubt about it; he had not thought much about it until now, but he began to be conscious that during the last hour or two hunger had been gaining upon him. So, with the help of Johan Muller's strong arm, he raised himself, and suffered himself to be propped up with pillows, and took the spoon in his hand, while Gertrude held the bowl of steaming nutriment conveniently for the attack; and Johan, seating himself at a little distance from the foot of the bed, looked on with deep interest in the combined occupation. Abstractedly considered, there are more affecting sights in the world than that of watching the progress of a meal; but it seemed as though the kindly big German could scarcely refrain his tears at the trembling eagerness with which the feeble invalid followed up his assault on the wooden citadel—the bowl, we mean—till nothing but bare walls were left, and Gertrude, his wife, fairly cried with joy.

It is unnecessary to detain the reader with a circumstantial account of the progressive stages

of recovering strength through which Penrhyn Clifford passed without any return of unfavourable symptoms; so that three days after his restoration to mental consciousness, he was able without much difficulty to raise himself from his reclining posture, and to hold short conversations with his benevolent host. The substance of the intelligence he received is as follows.

Some ten nights back, after Muller and his family had retired to rest, he was roused by the barking of his dogs, and a loud knocking at the strongly-barred gate of his house; and on answering the summons, loud and hurried voices, in the Tartar tongue, besought him to open his doors and receive a wounded man beneath his roof, who but for such charitable assistance must inevitably perish.

"And who," asked Muller, "shall warrant the truth of thy story? or how shall I know that thy intentions are not far otherwise than peaceable?"

"And, if thou refusest to open to us," asked the voice of one who appeared to be the guide and chief, "what should hinder our compelling an entrance against thy will, or the burning of thy homestead to the ground? But we know thee, Johan Muller, to be one of the men of peace, and no harm shall befall thee. We will leave the wounded one at thy gate and depart, if thou wilt promise to admit him when we are gone, and to nurture him as thou canst. If thou refusest this, his blood be upon thee and thine."

"Nay, depart not thus," said Johan; "I believe thee, and will trust thee;" and thereupon he opened his doors, and some of the fugitive band entered, bearing in their arms the wounded captive.

"Only that we know thou wilt do good without reward," said the Tartar spokesman, when they had laid their burden gently on the ground, "we would tell thee that he has that about him wherewith to pay thy charges, and that, moreover, he may be worth a heavy ransom. But do as thou pleasest in this matter; only, if he recover, let him assuredly know that we have taken not so much as a thread or a shoe-latchet from him; and the weapon with which he was girded we herewith restore." Saying which they placed a sheathed sword in the hands of the host.

"All this time," added Johan Muller, in whose words we will complete the narrative, "thou wert lying senseless before me with the stamp of death, as it were, on thy countenance, which was convulsed with fearful agony. Nevertheless, I be thought me to proffer refreshments to thy friends—if friends they were—but they refused, saying that, it might be, the avenger of blood was behind them; and thus they departed.

"Thou wert grievously wounded, my young friend. See; this"—and he produced a misshapen bullet—"was deeply seated in thy body, and was the cause of the grievous suffering thou must have endured until it was removed. And thou hadst strong fever, which had laid firm hold on thee; but God hath had mercy on thee, and brought thee back to the land of the living. And now, let us return thanks for his great goodness;" and, kneeling by the side of the couch, he gave utterance to those acknowledgments of gratitude which found an echo in Clifford's soul, and offered fervent petitions for continued manifestations of

lovingkindness and tender compassion on behalf of his unknown guest.

"I know not what thy creed may be," said Johan Muller, rising from his knees, "and thou knowest not mine; but the Word of Truth"—laying his hand on Clifford's English Testament—"was next thy heart when we divested thee of thy garments; and they who believe in the promises, and hope in the mercy therein revealed, are very near to each other in brotherhood. Happy for us, my young brother, if we can say, 'Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.'"

In such occasional communings as these, the time passed away neither uninterestingly nor unprofitably to Penrhyn Clifford. It had been indeed a serious season for him. He had been nigh death: he had been hanging, as it were, by a thread over the precipice of eternity. Life and its fleeting pursuits had appeared to him in their real dimensions; and from his inmost soul he had resolved that his health, if regained, should be devoted to its true ends—the glory and service of his Creator.

A "SIXTH SENSE" OF BIRDS.

THE celebrated naturalist, Audubon, was the author of an ornithological biography, entitled, "Sketches from the Life of Birds." Among other things, he therein maintains that vultures and eagles are directed to their booty by the sense of sight alone; that the sense of smell was in no wise useful to them, although they could detect the presence of garbage at the distance of miles. From more recent observations it would appear that, in addition to the senses of smell and sight, they must indubitably possess another sense, acting upon occasions when those of sight or smell would be useless. It is easy to say, "Of course, instinct!" But what is that which we call instinct in animals? We cannot tell. The word is simply a description of our utter ignorance, very convenient, like many other learned expressions, to make use of when we know not what else to say. Instinct is an impulse, a desire, an effort of the will directed upon some particular point. But whence this impulse? The stimulus must have come from without; therefore birds must possess a "sense." Why do pigeons fly early in the morning direct to a freshly-sown field, often miles away, when they could neither have seen nor smelt the provender?

Wild ducks, which generally feed during the night, are equally rapid and unerring in pitching upon what they esteem delicacies. Wherein, then, can this instinct—this "sixth sense"—consist? The wild deer are perfectly aware when the forest herd's small patch of grain is ripe, and not unfrequently come in considerable numbers to consume the entire harvest in a single night. All descriptions of birds, whatever their peculiarities of diet, possess the gift of discerning their food from distances which surpass the range of smell or vision. It is this which brings the carrier pigeon, enveloped in blinding devices *ad libitum*, safe back to her place of starting. Toss her in the air, you see her circle for a minute or so, and

straightway assume, without further hesitation, the correct direction.

Of the crossbeak, Audubon tells us: "The penetration which assembles these birds upon the same point, after they have dispersed during the night in various directions, frequently miles away, is to me a positive wonder. At a regular time of the morning they unite in the air, and then seek some common place of repose. This punctual assemblage can only be the result of previous arrangement."

Ornithologists have a yet more extraordinary fact to put forward respecting the eye of birds, which is, that the majority possess the remarkable gift of being able at will to change the focus of the lens of the eye. By this means they are enabled to perceive distant objects, invisible to human gaze, as distinctly as the smallest insect just before their beaks in the bark of a tree. Observe individuals wearing spectacles, particularly elderly persons who have far-sighted vision with convex glasses; they seek to recognise you over the spectacles if at a distance, but through them if close at hand. Go to the best optician of the day, and desire him to make an eye-glass through which you can distinguish near and distant objects with equal clearness. He will tell you the thing is impossible; he cannot make such glasses as birds possess by nature in their eyes.

A human being possessing healthy eyes has undoubtedly a wider range of vision than a bird, but he does not see so clearly. Captain Ross relates that in the Baffin's Bay expedition, with a clear atmosphere, the voyagers could overlook the sea in all directions to an extent of 150 miles. An animal can probably never see thus far. But reflect for an instant upon the clearness of gaze exhibited by birds of prey. The eagle hovers over us a minute black dot, and from thence perceives what we do not—the heath-cock at our feet, and, swooping downwards with the velocity of an arrow, bears it in triumph away. A naturalist placed some small earth-coloured beetles upon the ground, which he himself when standing erect could not distinguish from the soil on which they lay; but the little sharp-eyed thrush, high up in the heavens, could, and, upon the experimenter concealing himself, descended to consume the welcome food with no small relish. Many a bird extracts delicate insects from the bark of trees and branches whereon the human eye can perceive no trace of insect life.

The eye of the bird is comparatively of extraordinary size, and the horny skin more convex than is the case with the eye of any other being; it is furnished outwardly with a sclerotic envelope, and a circle of hard bony plates. The iris is extraordinarily susceptible of contraction, as may be remarked in dying birds; and, as in the human eye, this is effected by only six muscles. The large eyeballs of many birds are almost immovable, particularly in the case of the owl, with whose staring rigid gaze all are familiar. How it is possible to adapt the eye to instant recognition of the nearest and most distant objects is a question not yet cleared up by physiologists. The general opinion appears to be that, without itself increasing or decreasing in size, the eye changes

the globular form of the crystalline lens, and thus augments or diminishes the power of the refraction. Whatever theories may be put forward, the opinions of a quaint old German physiologist are pretty correct even at the present day:—"There is no darker portion of natural science," he says, "than just the doctrine of light. In no sphere of the sciences are we so blind as in the knowledge of seeing. We draw straight lines and circles, to represent the ray of light and the eye, and to demonstrate how the one falls upon the other, etc.; but *how we see* is more than we perceive."

EXTRAMURAL INTERMENTS,

WORKING CEMETERY.

THROUGHOUT the entire period of its occupation by the dwellings of men, the area of land comprising London and its wide outskirts has been, in its larger portion, singularly unsuited to the burial of the dead. Generally speaking, the soil is a stiff clay. Over this, in the first ages, lay the ordinary crust of forest land, interspersed with marshy places, both of which, containing the chemical agent of tannin, in solution and otherwise, tended to the lengthened preservation, rather than to the desirable and speedy decay, of what had been mortal of human generations; for the site of London in its primeval days was densely wooded. Probably, with the exception of the space occupied afterwards by the defences of the Tower, and presumed to have been the portion first covered by the Celtic "town of ships," the whole north bank of the Thames was clothed with thick woods. There is great reason to believe, from various excavations, and from researches made by our eminent friend, Mr. Roach Smith, and other city antiquaries, that even the vast swamp mentioned by Fitzstephen was not in existence, at least to any great extent, during the period of Roman occupation. It seems to have been artificially framed for the better defence of the northern walls—most likely by the Danes and Saxons, who, as a sea-board people, were accustomed to use this method of military defence. Thus nothing so probably pictures the scene to fancy as some sweep of the Mississippi or Ohio winding through virgin forests. To the South—what is now Lambeth, Southwark, Deptford, and the adjacent parts—it was covered by the tide at high water, and so continued a kind of shallow bay till the Romans embanked it, and formed across it more than one of their great military roads.

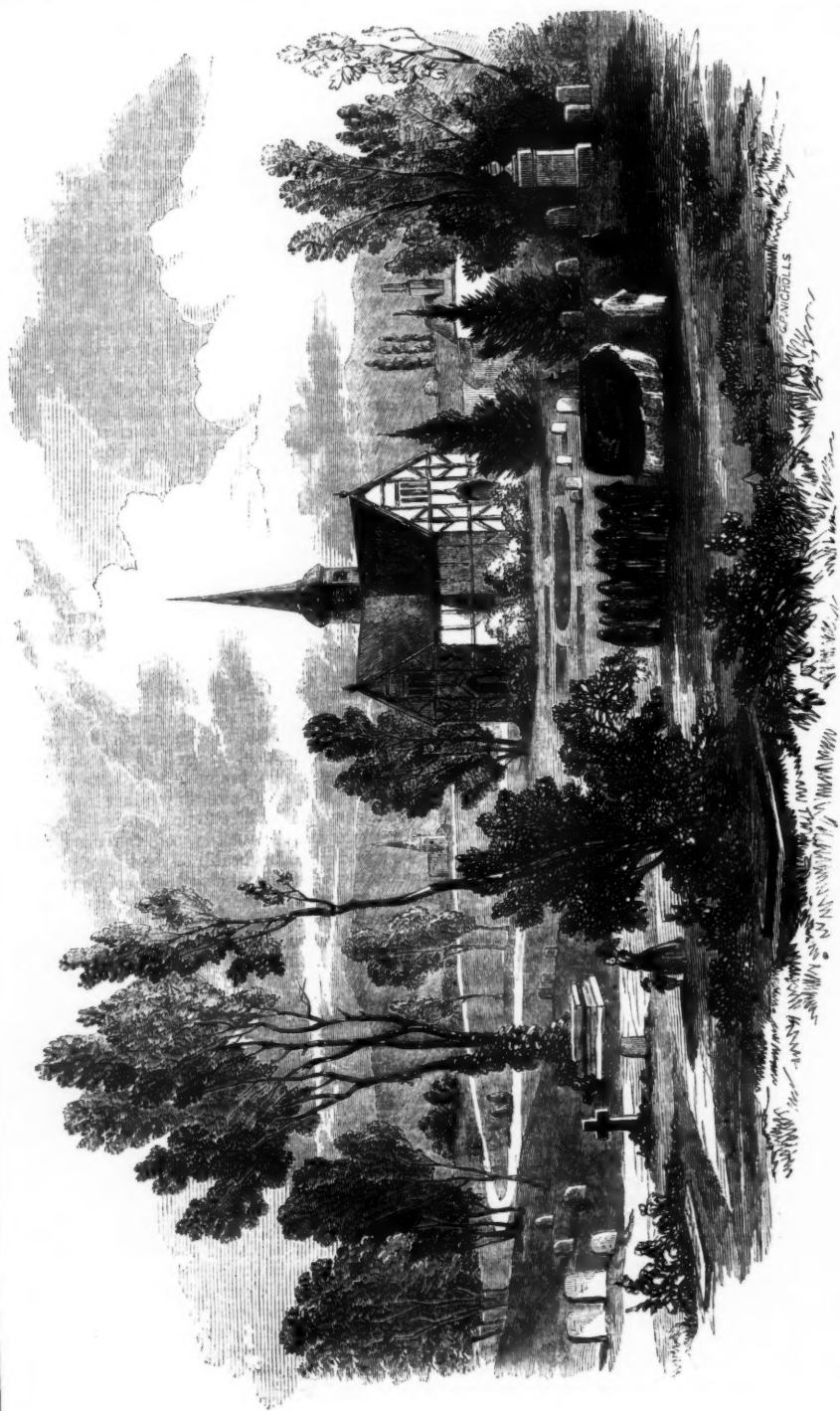
Thus, as the Celtic town grew, it was in time succeeded by the Londinium of the Romans, afterwards by Saxon, Danish, and Norman superstructures. With the wreck of city piled upon city, the unsuitableness to burial purposes could not have been otherwise than increased, consisting, as all such accumulations do, of rubble and animal remains of every conceivable kind. The aboriginal occupiers of the site of London buried their dead, as was their custom, far out of sight. The Romans also practised extramural interment. Thus it was not till the Saxon and Norman periods that we begin to find the dead clustered in spaces about the churches. From this custom no serious amount of evil resulted till population increased;

for large open spaces, such as gardens, fields, and lanes, surrounded most of the churchyards. There was, moreover, an abundance of that kind of vegetation which acts so efficiently as an agent in hastening decay and removing the impurities of burial—namely, turf and trees.

The great plagues of the middle ages performed a very important, though then unseen, service to the great question of extramural burial. They necessitated, from the vast number of the dead, interment without the walls. Again, marked advances in the amount of population begot the like effects. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth this circumstance prominently occurred, as it did again at other periods of history, till the close of the present century.

Throughout this lengthened space of time, the amount of dead interred within the walls of London is incalculable. During the sway of the Protector Somerset, as many, it is said, as 100,000 cartloads of human bones were carried from the charnel-house of St. Paul's to open spaces about Finsbury. There accumulated, they formed mounds raised so much above the level of the boggy soil, as to be used for erecting windmills upon them. These figure in old Ralph Aggas' plan of London, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Besides St. Paul's great charnel-house and other similar receptacles for the bones of the dead, the existing churchyards were already filled to repletion, and the evil was augmented as time wore on and population increased. The present state of many of the ancient churchyards, even those long unused, tells its own tale; for instance, that of old Pardon Church, on the north of Long-lane, Smithfield. Here excavations for sewers and other purposes show, even recently, the enormous amount of dead interred therein, as well as the antiseptic nature of the soil, by the undecayed state of these remains. We could multiply other instances; but the above will suffice to prove how these, as it were preserved, emanations of the dead must have deteriorated the health of the living. Of the numbers which thus saturated the soil generation after generation, no very proximate idea can be gathered. The old Mortuary Returns of the Parish Clerks of London, which were commenced in 1741, and carried on till 1837, though known to be most loose and inaccurate, supply us with the only data. Accumulatively they give the dead buried in the metropolis during this period as 2,105,112. Another return states that from 1838 to 1849, 167,887 human beings, exclusive of still-born children, were buried in the 148 metropolitan parishes. Generally speaking, the return for some past years, and till a recent date, has been roughly taken at 50,000 interments per annum.

This progressive evil did not escape the notice of the more intelligent. We find it referred to by many of the old city historians; and the Puritans, in the days of the great Cromwell, had a pithy saying as to this burial of the dead amidst the living. Nor were the writers of the days of Anne and the three first Georges wholly silent on the subject; for, through the fleeting literature of these periods frequent mention is made of the disgusting emanations of the city graveyards, and of the discreditable and irreligious scenes often enacted therein. Such was the condition of things at the



THE LONDON NECROPOLIS AT WORKING, AS INTENDED TO BE BY ITS PROJECTORS.

close of the last and the beginning of the present century. Finding the respective graveyards could literally contain no more, the parish officers of St. Giles-in-the-Fields, St. George Hanover-square, St. James Westminster, and St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, obtained local acts for the establishment of burial-grounds in the suburbs. These were formed in Gray's-inn-road, Hampstead-road, and at Camden Town. But as time proved, and enlarged policy might have foreseen, the remedy was temporary instead of ultimate. It was like postponing some inevitable consequence, or borrowing money to pay debts. It is the invariable result of temporizing with great social questions. It was the old remedy, and the old resulting evil over again. At the period of the Reformation, and for some time after, the site of St. Giles's Church stood literally in the fields; during the first quarter of the eighteenth century snipes were shot in fields adjacent to St. George, Hanover-square; in the days when St. James, Westminster, was built, wide gardens were around; and when as an infant the illustrious Lord Bacon was carried from York House in the Strand to be baptized in the old parish church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, Hedge-lane, now St. Martin's-lane, led literally to balmy pastures.

Thus, with respect to suburban burial in the beginning of the present century, the result was as heretofore. Population and dwellings increased; the semi-rural were gradually converted into town districts, and the space of forty to fifty years brought these suburban burial-grounds into the most pestiferous condition—thus proving, what parliamentary evidence has elicited, that suburban, no less than intramural interment, should be rigidly deprecated. Cemeteries, at the distance of seven, ten, or even twelve miles from the present existing suburbs, will effect little, if this great question be taken under any permanent consideration. Social improvement, mental enlightenment, and the spreading out of population, are relative laws. As the great body of the people gather knowledge; as they perceive more and more the value of pure air and of enlarged space about their dwellings; as a taste for the simpler pleasures of refined life becomes theirs; as they learn to appreciate more and more the bounty of Divine Wisdom in garden and field, they will seek to live as far apart from their work as possible. Thus, one of the foundations of this great question is the ethnological law pertaining to the Anglo-Saxon race—that in work it is congregative, in rest dispersive. With this tendency, therefore, in action, with the suburbs of London spreading as they are, no remedy can be effectual or prove final that does not remove the dead of the metropolis to such a distance as must obviate all recurrence of the old evils, and which does not provide such an amount of land as, held in reservation, will be ready for the use of future generations. In the words of Scripture, "Remove the dead far from our sight;" take it to those far outlying solitary heaths and hills set apart, as it were by Providence, for this last solemn service; bring science to our aid, and let the car of the congregated dead be borne out swiftly from the things of the living and the turmoil of human life; let the individual procession and the solemn service then begin; let all that was perishable in this

mortal life be consigned to its hitherto untenanted grave amidst the peace of nature, the scent of flowers, the shielding privacy of shrub and tree and we, in a sense, hallow the insentient dust to which we minister; we do reverence to our feelings of grief or pity; nay, perhaps we even learn from and bow to the will of Divine Power with more submission and with more love!

From 1830 to 1840-42, the question of extra-mural burial made great progress. Many individuals contributed greatly to this result, more particularly Mr. Walker. His able work on the "Graveyards of London" excited extraordinary attention, and produced most beneficial effects. These revelations led to parliamentary inquiry, and in due time Mr. Chadwick's masterly report on the subject followed. Legislative results slowly ensued. The newly constituted Board of Health proposed that government should become the executive in all points of the question of extra-mural burial. But to this proposition parliament and the public turned a deaf ear. The result, therefore, was finally this:—prohibitory acts were passed—the Metropolitan Interments Act in 1850, and the Metropolitan Burials Act in 1852, the latter modified and enlarged in the Burials Act of the last session. Government thus acting on the *laissez-faire* system, private individuals of judgment and acuteness took up the matter; enlightened principles were enunciated and a public company was formed; and in 1851 the Necropolis Company received its act of incorporation.

For a moment we must turn aside from our main narrative to speak of continental usage in reference to burial. For years it has stepped ahead of our obsolete customs. In Germany this has been especially the case. The burial of the dead is brought under governmental control. At Frankfort the responsible persons are a Commission, who hold their appointment under government. In Prussia and South Germany a similar body acts under the magistrates, and in Paris it constitutes a department of the prefecture of the police of the Seine. But it is in Frankfort, Munich, and Berlin, that the most enlightened measures connected with burial are carried out to their legitimate extent, and with the most favourable results. Cases of premature interment seem first to have led to a public consideration of the general question of burial, and next to the establishment, in the two former cities, of houses for the reception of the dead. The example was soon copied. Thus foreigners, with a less dense town population than ourselves, were the first to act in mitigation of the enormous and varied evils consequent upon a retention of the dead amidst the living, for lengthened periods previous to interment. In the cities just mentioned, immediate notice, on the occurrence of death, is given to the proper authorities. The body is then removed to the house of reception, and there retained under admirable medical and other supervision till signs of decomposition unmistakably present themselves. If a female, the corpse is under the reverent care of its own sex. The cost of burials likewise comes under a plan of general management—usually that of joint contract; the cemeteries are placed without the towns, and under

the control of specially trained persons; and in Frankfort and Munich no more than a single interment is permitted in a grave—experience having shown that the human body returns much quicker to its component elements under this method than any other, and that the emanations from it are more diffused and less deleterious. The period of re-opening graves varies in these different German cities from fifteen, eighteen, twenty, to twenty-one years.

Cognizant of, and recognising these enlightened principles; fully aware that unless the question of extramural burial for a vast metropolis like London were taken upon the basis of a wide generalization, ultimate failure must ensue; the Necropolis Company bound itself most liberally in its act of incorporation, to single interments in each grave; it selected and purchased a vast extent, namely, two thousand one hundred acres of valuable and most appropriate land, at such a distance from town as combined accessibility with due remoteness; it organized an inclusive plan of burial charges, optional as to adoption, but enormously reducing cost; it issued a scale of tariffs suitable to the means of all classes; it made arrangements with the South-Western Railway Company for the conveyance of the dead to the outskirts of its Cemetery; it erected a special station entirely for its own use in the Westminster Road; and, at the close of 1854, the Cemetery was consecrated and brought into use.

An archway of variegated brickwork leads from the Westminster Road into the station of the Necropolis Company. It was built from a design of Sir William Cubitt, and the shafts and curve of the light Norman arch brings to mind a similar one of great beauty in the choir of St. Bartholomew-the-Great in Smithfield. From thence the narrow roadway, descending for some space between high walls, or rather sides of buildings on either side, brings hearses, carriages, and those on foot, on to the wide pavement of the station. This occupies one side only, the other being bound by the lofty buildings of the Westminster Bridge station of the South-Western Railway. Across this pavement, which is as scrupulously bright and clean as a cathedral floor, the dead are lifted from their respective hearses into the seclusion of places purposely provided; and the vehicles drive on to the gate of exit at the further end. On to this pavement, or platform, many office windows look, some of them made cheerful by bright-flowered plants. On this level are the range of third class waiting-rooms, well and appropriately furnished. A massive and handsome staircase of stone leads to the next floor, which is devoted to the use of second class funerals; it thence ascends to the third floor, level with the railway platform, and on which lie the first class reception and waiting-rooms. With the most trifling difference, the various class rooms are furnished precisely alike: to the honour of the Necropolis Company, it has been the first to strip the necessary ceremonies annexed to death and the grave of an invidious distinction of rank. There is the same privacy, the same quietude, the same respect for poor as well as rich. The remains of "the weak and lowly" are honoured as well as those who, in the beautiful words of old Sir Thomas Browne, "are pompous even in the grave."

If the sun be shining, it pours down through the lofty glass roof; it lies upon the wide and spotless pavement; it lights the pleasant windows of rooms and offices; it rests on planks and flowers upon the window-ledges; it casts no shadow on the massive tender, waiting to convey the dead; nor on carriages that may convey the most touching and profound of human grief.

The dead are received at the Necropolis Station the night previous to interment, but for no longer period. The Company intended otherwise. It proposed to bring into force, as far as a public body might, advantages similar to those belonging to the German reception-houses; but the intention met with parochial opposition, and so for the present it rests. But ultimately there is little fear that this and other advances will rise superior to the objections of prejudice and unreflecting affection. The coffins are conveyed by a steam-lift to the second and upper floors, according to the class of funeral; ultimately all are conveyed to the level of the railway by the same process. Then, with the utmost privacy and dispatch, the massive tender receives its load, each coffin having a distinct and separate compartment; the steam and other carriages are attached, the whole go slowly a little way, till out of the precincts of the Necropolis Company; they then reach the line of the South-Western Railway, are attached to an express train, and are off with the speed of the winds.

To us who have trod so many of the wild heaths and uplands of England; who have spent lengthened summer days by the old solitary barrows of the forgotten dead; who have seen such opened, and looked with reverence upon what remained of those once "in the flesh" like ourselves, there is much that is eminently poetic in this selection of Woking Heath, one of the loveliest of the downs of Western Surrey, for a national "city of the dead." Apart from the utilitarian fact, that it was amongst the wide levels to the south, London was likely to find a true site for a cemetery on a great scale, it was to these old heaths and uplands that our many-nationed ancestors loved to bring their dead. The downs and high lands of southern England, from Devonshire to the Foreland, are covered more or less with tumuli and barrows; the uplands of Surrey, Sussex, and Kent more especially so. Thus we see what profound elements of poetry lie beneath the surface of the most utilitarian and prosaic questions; and that the nobler instincts and promptings of man in an uncivilized condition are reproduced and modified under a high form of civilization. His common-sense instincts and poetic fancy—perhaps his superstition—led Celt or Saxon to bring his dead thus into the silent presence of nature: science, knowledge, faith, are reproducing the same results in the present, and will more so in the time to come.

Past all traces and signs of London; past hamlets and solitary farms; past field, orchard, and meadow; past wild sweeps of moorland, green with gorse and fern, and embrowned with turf-cutters' stacks; past tracks clad with heather, across which the clearest of brooklets run shining in the sun; past glimpses of the pretty river Wey, and reaches of the Basingstoke Canal, which latter, forming pools and breaking over dams of stone, winds close beside the railway. If it be spring, summer, or

autumn, myriads of wild flowers fringe and dip into the pools, clothe the far-stretching heathlands, deck the pastures, and nestle in the hedgerows. Beyond Weybridge, the Company's estate begins, running thence for two miles along the line of railway. The scenery is solitary, broken, and rugged; the carriages, as they sweep on, seem to crush the heather; then at intervals come field, gravel-pit, and mounds of earth. At a signal the trains are disunited; the one passes still more swiftly on its work of life and duty, the other more slowly on its hallowed service to the dead.

The first impression gained of the Cemetery is that of some such noble garden as the gorgeous fancy of Bacon loved to picture; for one passes clumps of young woodland, wide plots of heather, whole groves of American plants; then the train pauses beside the wide pavement of the first refreshment-house. This is low, deeply verandahed, built of wood, and forms three sides of a square, floored with asphalt, in the centre of which is a circular bed of the choicest American plants. The verandah bends a little round at either end nearest the platform, forming in this way a sort of screen, in which are rooms for the reception of the coffins. At the rear of these screens, the several funeral processions are formed in entire privacy.

Considering that simplicity is the highest form of art in all which relates to death and burial, the unpretending character of this and the other refreshment-house—both being precisely alike—is in the best of taste. So are the little church and chapel, whose only difference is thus in name. Costly edifices of stone would have been far less in keeping with the tranquil, simple beauty of the scene, or with the striking growth of public feeling, especially amongst the educated classes, in favour of unexpensive simplicity in all that relates to the burial of the dead. Enlightened man seeks now to draw from nature the adornments of his last resting-place; and the class of architecture which reproduces the village church in its simplest form will always best suit these scenes, as well as be most congenial to English taste and feeling.

Only 400 acres are as yet set apart for burial purposes. This section, small as it is compared to what is held in reserve, is yet larger by above one-fourth than the area comprising the united graveyards and cemeteries of London, in which, till recently, upwards of 50,000 bodies were annually, in Mr. Walker's words, "got rid of." Ascending the grassy knoll to the chapel, this portion lies before us, fenced in and divided by a roadway, which separates the consecrated from the unconsecrated portion of the Cemetery, both being in process of conversion into the loveliest of gardens.

The undulating character of the ground offered unusual facilities to a landscape gardener of taste. To this was added the beauty of the surrounding scenery. Taking advantage of both, willing to make his picture worthy the setting, the company's landscape gardener, Mr. Donald, of Woking, has laid out future avenues, terraces, lawns, grassy knolls, and fringing belts of woodland, with admirable effect, as may already be seen. Fully aware that in this part of Surrey the class of American evergreens flourishes with surprising luxuriance, and that a garden dedicated to such a solemn purpose as that of enshrining the ashes of the dead

should bloom with *ver perpetuum*—perpetual spring—these have been largely planted. Here magnolias, andromedas, azaleas, and rhododendrons will thrive as in their native forests, and, at their time of bloom, spread their honied scent for miles.

On another knoll in the consecrated ground lies the little church; near it the other refreshment-house. Thither the tender and carriages pass on a tramway drawn by horses, to leave such of the dead as are destined for burial in consecrated ground. Yet, from whichever knoll the scene be viewed, it is still the same—peaceful, solitary, far extended, and bounded in by hills, that most appropriately seem to close out the world. Those hills to the west, or Hampshire side, look dun and wild; otherwise the landscape is cheerful, varied as it is by farms, woods, strips of moorland, fields, and browsing cattle. It is a picture which Constable might have painted.

The appropriate service, read in church or chapel, as the case may be, the sunlight lying, most probably, meanwhile upon the pall, typical perhaps to mourning hearts of the resurrection and the life to come, the coffin is moved away upon a wheeled bier to its apportioned grave, followed, in entire privacy, by its little band of mourners. No harassment, no interruption, nothing to desecrate the sublime lessons which burial should teach! This grave may lie where the falling blooms of azalea or magnolia may cover it with perfume and beauty; or where acacia, or purple beech, or Irish yew, lend shade; or, dug amidst the native heather, may in summer have a myriad little humming visitants—the bees. Each grave is white with the sands of primeval seas; dry as a chamber floor; untenanted and unpolluted for its coming guest. This, too, at a cost very moderate.

Countless thoughts crowd upon the mind, standing by graves like these, whether they be those of rich or poor. There is regret for the past—large hope for the future. No one can make more solemn protest than the hand that sets this down, against the enormous evils contingent to burial within or immediately without London, because nine years' public service has brought these evils intimately to our knowledge. We know the deterioration, moral and religious, which arises amongst our working population from that undue familiarity with death, consequent upon lengthened retention of the corpse amidst the living. We know that the best of feelings are crushed and brutalized by the scenes enacted at the burial of the poor; we know also how useless and exorbitant funeral expenses have hitherto trenchoned upon the means of the middle classes. It is now in the power of all to modify these evils, if so they will, though not greatly so by the poor, till there be for them better house accommodation, and their habitation of 20,000 single rooms, namely, one room per family, be reduced to a minimum.*

* Our object in this paper is to awaken our readers' minds to the importance of the subject of extramural interment, and not to advocate the merits of any one particular cemetery. Still the public may be interested in knowing (and it is only doing justice to those who have taken the initiative in a work of social usefulness to mention the fact) that the working man can, through the tariffs of the Necropolis Company, reduce the price of burial to £2 10s. or £1; the middle classes to £10 10s. or £15; and the rich likewise proportionately.

Of the wide range of physical benefits following upon a great scale of far-removed burial, few can doubt, even with feelings weaker, as respects these points, than ours. Nor should moral and religious results be less generously reckoned. Who knows, amongst the countless throng destined to come here in mournful service to the dead, what faith may be strengthened, what consciousness to error, what penitence shall be awakened, what resolves to better life made, by this tranquil scene, fashioned so beautifully and appropriately by no less a hand than that of God. Who knows how the proud and worldly may return from such visitation humble and with hearts less set upon "the riches that corrupt." Who knows how the poor and lowly may go back to their lives of struggle and labour soothed, comforted, braced to new endeavour, by the thought that they have left their beloved dead in a place so beautiful and cared for! Who knows what feeling may be awakened in the ignorant or hardened by this their first impression of the peaceful and beautiful in connexion with death and the grave; or what germs of childish genius may be set as its weeping eyes look round upon the richness of wide-spread blooms, or sees some exquisite effect of sunlight or shadow on the landscape! None shall reckon up these blessing but He who teaches us, and leads us on the path of these ameliorations.

A PEEP AT THE SCILLY ISLANDS.

THE tourist who takes a trip from the mainland of Cornwall to the Scilly Islands, cannot reckon on the regularity and punctuality of steam conveyance. The traffic backwards and forwards is not sufficient in amount to pay for the expense of a single steam-boat, and the transit must therefore be made in a sailing vessel, which was formerly a gentleman's yacht. Mr. Walter White, in his entertaining volume entitled "A Londoner's Walk to the Land's End," gives an account of a flying visit which he paid to St. Mary's, the largest of the islands, and from whence he took a sort of bird's-eye view of the whole group. His relation is graphic and spirited, and we shall condense a few of his facts, in the full conviction that they will be acceptable to our readers.

Starting from Penzance soon after nine in the morning of a July day, it was after sunset when he had accomplished the distance of thirty-six miles which lie between Penzance and Hugh Town. He had therefore ample time to speculate on the Cornish traditions which record that dry land once filled up the space between the Scilly Isles and the Land's End. Here, says the tradition, lay far outspread a region of unwonted beauty and fertility, strewn with villages, and hallowed by one hundred and forty churches, known to the Cornish as Lethostow or Lyonesse. And tales of the olden time tell of great and gallant deeds wrought in that fair land, the memory of which has been kept alive for ages by wandering minstrels. But, shaken by some mighty convulsion, the lovely region sank down into the depths; the sea rushed in and completed the destruction, leaving no trace of what had been, except the Seven Stones, the Wolf Rock, and a grim

likeness between the cliffs of the Land's End and of St. Martin's Head—the nearest of the isles. The Seven Stones are so many small rocks protruding above the water; and the Wolf Rock is a solitary mass of slate, rising out of the sea just in the track of ships bound from the German ocean to the Irish channel.

On arriving at Hugh Town, the traveller found a numerous crowd awaiting the coming of the packet—a great event for the inhabitants. The hotel at which he knocked for admittance was shut up, and the doors were only opened when the inmates were made aware that their disturber was a stranger. They apologised for the closed door, having shut up early to prevent the influx of tap-room customers at that late hour. After breakfast next morning, he began his survey by a walk through the gate of Star Fort to the park; the latter one of the most remarkable features of the place, stocked as it is with deer and wild rabbits flitting here and there among patches of gorse and fern, and covered with a luxurious turf; the sea surrounding it on all sides, save where it is connected by a sandy isthmus with the larger portion of the island. Upon the low isthmus the town is built; and Mr. White prophesies that at some date not very distant it will be submerged by the sea, and the pleasant park become an island. His walk led him round the Maypole-hill, whence he returned through the main street and market-place—noticing by the way an hotel whose owners had shut it up while they were off to the mainland for a holiday trip—a prison which was for show rather than for use, and a "bank," which was not a deposit for notes and gold, but for anybody who chose to recline upon it.

At the other end of the town he ascended Buzza-hill, from whence he obtained a view of a large portion of the island and Peninnis Head. Seen from this point the pool and road resemble a vast lake. From St. Agnes on the left, to St. Martin's on the right, the eye takes in all the largest islands of the group; while farther away one sees hummocks of all dimensions known as the "Off Islands." A bright spot on Tresco is the residence of the lord proprietor, standing among gardens described as perfect wonders of horticultural taste and skill, where are avenues of geraniums fifteen feet high, and plantations of the rarest exotics. The Scilly isles consist of not less than three hundred islands, islets, and rocks, scattered over an area of ten square leagues. Only six of them are inhabited, and the whole population amounts to but 2700, of whom 1600 live in St. Mary's. Tresco numbers 450, and St. Agnes and St. Martin's each about half as many; while Bryer and Samson have but 130 between them. The people live by fishing, piloting, farming, and shipbuilding. The Off Islands are tenanted only by rabbits, sea-fowl, and a large species of cray-fish.

An old man whom the visitor met with talked of great changes in the isles since he was young. Then "there was no potato-growing, little farming, and but wretched habitations. Sometimes there was no salt to be had, and everybody smuggled; and people paid more attention to wrecking than to regular work. Folks cared nothing for dress nor cleanliness. They used to

burn turf, but the present governor had put an end to that; for when the turf was cut the wind blowed all the ground away." Pointing to St. Mary's Sound, the restless channel on the side towards St. Agnes, he went on to say: "Many a ship had struck upon some of them rocks in the night and gone down, and nobody the wiser, except them on board. Sometimes when daylight came, the top of a mast was seen above the water, and that was all. Five families were once lost while crossing to St. Agnes. A West Indianman had run on the rocks of Bryher but three or four years ago, and some had got a pretty picking out of her. Then, on the other side, out towards St. Martin's, there was the rock where the Dutch East Indianman was cast away with 250,000 dollars on board. That was a long time ago; but there was money still to be grubbed up in the sand."

From Buzza-hill the visitor walked to Peninnis—the head of the isles. He describes the granite blocks, which appear insignificant at a distance, as huge masses as large as the base of the monument.

"So enormous are they, and so marvellously piled, that for a time I could scarcely believe the evidence of my own eyes. Standing there, on the extremest point of land, nothing but the broad Atlantic between it and America, I could not help fancying it a work of giants; their last defence against the puny race who were to invent the steam-engine and the electric telegraph. The blocks are built up in a way so apparently artificial as to favour the illusion. Solid buttresses project into the sea; here is a part of a mighty bastion; here the remains of a gateway that none but giants could have built; here the angle of a vast chamber. There a stupendous wall has fallen outwards, and the water, which covers the outermost blocks, seems eager to drown the remainder as it rushes over them in endless surges. There a similar wall has fallen inwards, and the blocks strew the surf in horrid confusion. Yonder stands a pyramid broken in the final struggle; and round about lie the mutilated limbs of statues on a scale far beyond all that Egypt ever dreamt of, intermingled with the heads of animals—a bull, a snake, an elephant: the ruins of a temple as well as of a fortress. I am not exaggerating. The hard granite is so worn and rounded off by the tempests of ages, that even a sluggish imagination may detect these wonderful resemblances. Some of the stones are furrowed with what appear to be deeply-graven and mysterious Runes. But leaving the imagination aside, Peninnis holds you with a spell. In some places the blocks stand erect and well jointed, as if squared and set by hands and tools; but where they have fallen, the interstices form a bewildering maze. Caverns, passages, vaults, niches, hung with ferns and lichen. Through those in a line with the wind rushes a howling blast; others are snug and sheltered—spots where you may repose awhile and listen to the thunder of the waves. Some inclose small crystal pools; in others a strip of green water runs ceaselessly to and fro. Altogether an inexhaustible source of wonder and admiration. I climbed to the topmost block. The height is not great—some sixty feet; but the impression made on my mind by the wild and lonely scene has seldom been equalled. Ocean rolled there in its sublimity. There was heard the voice of the deep—solemn as from of old, and for evermore. A voice never silent; heard afar on every shore of the round world, telling of the glory of Him who made it."

A short distance from these remarkable and suggestive objects, stand the Kettle and Pans, so-called rock basins, imagined by antiquarians to have been used in the sacrificial rites of the Druids. They are, however, entirely of natural formation, the joint work of wind and wave. Further on stands the Pulpit Rock, above which

projects what seems a sound-board nearly fifty feet in length, and twelve in breadth. One may walk safely on the spacious table, the surface of which is indented with small circular hollows, the beginnings of rock basins.

On again, across the Carn Lea, the old town with its church and bay comes into view; it was once the principal place of the isle, but the trade has migrated to Hugh Town, and it has fallen into decay. In the church porch Mr. White found a boy nursing a child, which his "missus" had exiled for a time, because it would "keep on a crying so." The boy, who worked for a farmer, got four pounds a year and his food, and liked his work "brave." The visitor then proceeded along the beach to Tolmen Point, so named from the Tolmen, or perforated stone, another Druidic monument, which lies on its summit. Hence a view of the interior of the isle exhibits somewhat of its economy. An elevated parallelogram that looks like a fort proves to be a garden—a garden in St. Mary's being possible only when sheltered by lofty and solid defences. It is in such gardens, of which there are many, that the early potatoes are raised which bring half-a-crown a pound in Covent Garden Market. You see that every house has a porch closed towards the prevalent blasts, and that the thatch is kept from driving away by pegs and interlacing bands, and by terminating within the edge of the wall. All which precautions are but too much needed, seeing that damp and wind are the characteristics of the climate, and that of calm and tranquil days there are not on an average more than six in a year.

Thence, passing the Blue Carn, the southernmost point of the isle, the visitor went on to Giant's Castle, a triple-ringed intrenchment on the edge of the cliff, supposed to be of Danish origin. Near it is a huge logan stone, weighing forty-five tons, which sways with a little pushing. From this point the eye overlooks the fatal rocks on which Sir Cloudesley Shovel was wrecked in 1707, with four of his ships and two thousand men. Henry Trelawny, the son of the bishop whom James imprisoned in the Tower, and whose captivity suggested the famous Cornish song quoted by Macaulay, was among the drowned.

The second day's ramble led Mr. White to Star Castle, with its little garrison, whose duty consists mainly in ringing a bell and hauling the Union Jack up and down at regular intervals. Star Castle is a small fort built in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and bristles with cannon on all sides. Some interesting historical associations are connected with it. During the civil war it was a place of imprisonment and refuge. Prince Charles and some of the Godolphins came here voluntarily; so did Lady Fanshawe, who gives a dismal account of it in her memoirs. Van Tromp attempted to bribe the governor to surrender it and the isles to him, but Sir John Granville was deaf to his tempting offers. Cromwell sent to the Star Fortress the celebrated divine, John Biddle, "to keep him out of the way of his brother Nonconformists, his persecutors"—as the record has it.

The early departure of the packet on the second day did not allow of any further investigations, and the visitor had again to set sail for Penzance; but he congratulates himself that he had made

good use of his time, and carried away a fair impression of the aspect of St. Mary's, which more or less represents the rest of the islands. On board the boat was a middle-aged woman who was making her first trip to the main, having lived more than forty years on these rocks without ever visiting England. According to the captain's testimony, there are hundreds of the Scillonians in the same predicament. The subjects talked of on board were "Mr. Smith" (the Governor) and "potatoes." The land proprietor's character was freely canvassed, and some objections were taken to the strictness of his rule, which all, however, agreed had been in the main beneficial—Scilly having never been so well off as under Mr. Smith.

Touching the "potatoes," a few curious particulars came to light.

"London is the great market. Fifteen thousand baskets had been sent away since the commencement of the season (it was then the middle of July)—the last cargo on the previous Saturday. A Scilly pilot-boat carries three hundred baskets, each containing a hundred-weight of potatoes, to Southampton, for a shilling the basket. From Southampton they are forwarded to Covent Garden; and as some of the earliest parcels in February realise a shilling a pound on the average, there remains a handsome profit. 'But the price gets lower every week,' said my informant, 'and sometimes about Midsummer all that a man gets in return for a dozen baskets is a dozen postage stamps in a letter. We think it time to stop then.' The year had been one of the best for potatoes ever known in Scilly. In 1853 the people of St. Martin's got £2000 for their crop; the potatoes of that isle being considered the best. But the growers were described as a close-fisted set, eager to make money and keen to save. Nevertheless, the Scillonians subscribed £250 to the Patriotic Fund. The young merchant went on to tell me of the origin of the potato-trade. About fifteen years ago his father, Alexander Gibson, while off the isles with the quarantine boat, hailed a Spanish vessel, and while on board saw some fine looking potatoes, of which the captain gave him a few. These he planted, and he saved the produce, finding them to ripen remarkably early, for successive seasons; and at last had a surplus to sell to his neighbours. One after another took to planting the early sort, and now, as we have seen, the supply is fifteen thousand hundredweights in the first half of the year—no unimportant item in the resources of the isles. The second crop which follows is mostly retained for home consumption, though large quantities are sent to the markets of Wales."

The above brief sketch of the present aspect of the Scilly Islands is upon the whole an encouraging sign of the march of social progress. We have in mind the very different report of a traveller who visited them half a century back. Then, if the details he gave were to be relied on, the inhabitants were for the most part little better than prowling savages—reckless in their prosecution of the contraband trade, and merciless in their profession as wreckers. Woe to the unfortunate crews driven by the tempest upon their inhospitable shores! In a shipwrecked man the wrecker saw an enemy, because he saw in him a claimant for the shipwrecked property, and while he risked his life to rescue the floating cargo, would allow the sinking castaway to perish before his eyes, without stretching out a helping hand. That era of barbarity has passed away; and the Scillonians of the present day find in the profits of lawful industry the means of leading a respectable life, and in the advance of education among them the elements of respectable character.

AN INSURANCE AGENT.

THE Scottish Equitable Insurance Society have lately circulated among their London constituents a memoir of their late agent in London, Captain William Cook, transferred from the pages of that excellent and useful periodical, "Excelsior." Some circumstances of this gentleman's life were so eventful, and his principles are so worthy of imitation, that we are desirous of giving them as wide an introduction as possible to public notice.

"William Cook was born at Greenock about the year 1788. His father commanded a vessel of his own, but died whilst his son was little more than an infant. The sailor's widow gave her little boy such schooling as her means could afford; and at ten years of age he left home for good and went to sea, and by the time he was thirteen years old his earnings were the chief support of his mother and two sisters. His mother had made him get by heart the Shorter Catechism and the Scripture Proofs; and this, together with a certain influence from her own exhortations, he regarded as his chief preservative from evil. For, although he was in some respects no better than other lads, he could never forget the catechism and the bible texts; and they, at least, kept him from drinking and the grosser immoralities. He was an excellent seaman. More especially he was remarkable for cool bravery and daring. As he once told us, 'I never knew fear. I heard people speak about being nervous, but I did not understand the feeling. Still it was only stoicism—a dogged contempt of death and danger; it was not the courage of a Christian.' He had his own share of adventures. Whilst mate of a merchant vessel he fell into the hands of a press-gang, and served for two years and a half on board a man-of-war; and afterwards, whilst commanding a trader in the China Seas, he was taken by pirates, and made a narrow escape from being murdered on the spot. But probably his name would never have emerged above the level of the many intrepid and self-sacrificing men who conduct across the deep the wealth of England, had it not been for an incident that awakened much attention at the time, and of which the remembrance ought not to perish.

"In the end of February, 1825, after being long detained by contrary winds, Captain Cook sailed from Falmouth in command of the 'Cambria,' a small vessel of 200 tons burden, with thirty-six miners, as passengers, on board, whom he was conveying to Vera Cruz. On the morning of the 1st of March he was overtaken by stormy weather in the Bay of Biscay, and was driven considerably out of his course. Whilst joggling on impatiently in a track which he was anxious to quit, he saw a large vessel bearing towards him under press of sail. At first he took little notice; but observing signals of distress flying at each mast-head, he hastened to render assistance. On drawing near he perceived that she had troops on board; and he saw what could not be fewer than five or six hundred persons crowded on the rigging and all along the hammock nettings. But it was not till within half-a-mile that, crossing her bows in order to take up a position to leeward, Captain Cook discovered thick volumes of smoke

issuing from her ports, and saw too plainly that the stranger was on fire.

"A boat soon came on board, and told him that this was the 'Kent' East Indiaman; that she had been burning for the last five hours; that the fire must now be near the powder-magazine; that she had on board from six to seven hundred souls; and Captain Cook was asked how many of this number he could receive. 'All! all!' was the instant answer of a British tar. But the rescue was attended with enormous difficulties. The guns of the merchant-warrior were loaded and shotted; and as the fire approached, they would discharge themselves to the imminent danger of the friendly deliverer. And, what was a much more fearful peril, there were 500 barrels of gun-powder, which any moment might scatter the mighty ship on the seething waters like the fragments of a filbert-shell. But Captain Cook sailed close up under the burning vessel's stern; and, in concert with the commander of the 'Kent,' at once completed his arrangements. From the stern of the ship there projects a horizontal beam called the spanker-boom. To ordinary people in the calmest weather it would be dizzy work to creep out along that slippery timber and look down from a height of twenty feet; but on this occasion the sea ran mountains high, and for most of those who wished to escape, it was needful to find their way to the farthest extremity of this giddy path, whilst the ship was rising and plunging in the storm; and then, when he reached the end of this beam, the soldier, or whoever he might be, had to lower himself from his sickening elevation by a rope, so as to catch the boat which was hovering to and fro on the billows beneath. And fortunate was he if he dropped into it at once; for if, as often happened, the boat was swept away by the swell, before it could return the poor fellow was buried deep under the water, and then found himself drawn up to dangle high in air. And it was only after many a trial and many a miss that some at last flung themselves bruised and dripping into the ark of refuge. The courage of others entirely failed. They advanced a little way along the spanker-boom, and then, when they looked down into the boiling surge, they could only lie close and hug the timber; and as there they clung, with blanched cheeks and clammy hands, refusing to proceed, and obstructing others, they died many deaths in rejecting the means of safety.

It was a fearful scene: for it was the Bay of Biscay, and hundreds of miles from the nearest land. The shades of night had gathered round them; and on board the little 'Cambria' hundreds of the saved stood shivering in wet garments in the keen March wind, whilst the great seas burst, and through the broken bulwarks washed ankle-deep along the deck. And with his drawn sword, the captain stood at the vessel's side, receiving fresh cargoes of the rescued, and driving back the reluctant and exhausted sailors in quest of more. And yonder, at a cable's distance, amid the howling of the tempest, amidst the crackle of the flames and the crash of timbers, like a floating volcano, leaped and laboured the mighty ship in her fiery throes. And there could be seen the idle lines down which no more of the panic-stricken remnant

could be induced to drop, and under them the one lingering boat which vainly urged the venture. And now after a five hours' grapple with destruction—a fierce and fearful combat with wind, fire, and water—the 'Cambria' is forced to quit. Five hundred and fifty-seven immortal beings has she snatched from the jaws of death; and many has been the shriek of ecstasy as the successive boats came alongside and restored to the embrace of frantic wives and children husbands and fathers who were given up for lost. But now no more can be done, and slowly the brig drops away. At a little distance she sees the devouring element sweep over the upper deck, and like lightning rush up the masts and the rigging. In the conflagration the heavens are lighted up; and for awhile the flags of distress, which had been hoisted in the morning, keep waving amid the flames. At last, one after one, 'like stately steeples,' the masts fall overboard. And there it comes! The magazine is reached, and in blazing rockets the exploded castle goes up into the firmament; and by the time the roar has reached the 'Cambria', the fiery shower has rained back into the surge, and all is quenched, and dark, and desolate.

"After this, the 'Cambria' made speed for a place of safety. A cabin, intended for eight or ten, was packed with eighty occupants, and so densely peopled were the decks, that at no one time could a half lie down. There was food on board sufficient for ten days; but to work the ship amidst such a crowd was an arduous problem, and to six hundred human beings, wet, and miserable, and crammed together, a protracted voyage would have been a dire calamity. The breeze, however, was fair for Falmouth; and, after a rapid run of eight-and-forty hours, the 'Cambria' was off the harbour, and, by an opportune veer of the wind, she was enabled to enter at once. But as soon as she was safely within, and whilst the seamen were still handing the sails, the wind went round to the north-east, and they shuddered to think that if they had arrived a little later, they might all have been blown back to sea.

"In every such deliverance many providences converge. Without the 'Cambria' there was no likelihood that any of the 640 persons shut up in the 'Kent' could have been rescued from their fiery prison; for in all that day of terror, and all the homeward voyage of the 'Cambria,' till she reached the chops of the Channel, not a single sail was sighted. And, in order to bring the two ships together, it was needful that Captain Cook should be kept from weighing anchor for weeks beyond the time intended, and that he should be driven out of his proper course by the storm of that Tuesday morning. In order to effect the rescue, it was needful that the tempest of the morning should have so far abated that row-boats could live and effect the passage from ship to ship; and it was needful that the flames should be kept back from the powder-magazine for an unwanted period. In order to accommodate such an influx of passengers, it was needful that the 'Cambria' should be encumbered with no bulky cargo, and that she should be supplied with a good store of provisions—conditions that were met by her carrying not freight but passengers, and by her hav-

ing almost intact the rations she had laid-in in port. But in order to make even these provisions last, and to escape the horrors of a pestilence, it was needful that the 'Cambria,' with her shattered bulwarks and now-laden hull, should be sped on her homeward way—a condition which was more than met by the double change of wind which wafted her back to Falmouth, and dropped her direct into the anchorage of Carril roads. All this was arranged by Him who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working; and, though the deep had opened and sent up from beneath some miraculous asylum, or although the sky had opened and revealed the outstretched arm of Omnipotence, the call to praise God for his goodness could not have been louder, nor could the deliverance have been more truly divine.

"Of the share which he had in this rescue, Captain Cook was seldom disposed to speak. His turn was the reverse of boastful, and he seemed almost oppressed by the importance attached to this incident. The last time we alluded to it, he said: 'I was but a poor instrument in the hand of Providence. He could easily have found another. He had no need of me. When I came home on that occasion, I was fêted and petted; but last week, though my bodily suffering was as great as mortal man could bear, I was thinking how much happier I am now than then: for, in those days I had not found out the great source of consolation.'

"When it was that he made this great discovery, we cannot tell, nor could he tell the exact time himself. But during his latter years, the excellent of the earth were all his delight, and the house of prayer was his endeared resort. 'For two-and-twenty years,' he lately remarked, 'in choosing a house, I have always taken care to choose it where I could easily get twice a-day to the house of God: and so much did he love the place, that he still would come to it when every movement was agony, and it was a distress to see his pale and death-stricken countenance.

"For the last ten months and more he was an invalid, and his suffering was frequently severe. His firm nerves and hardy frame were capable of great endurance; but the helplessness and captivity of the sick-room were a severe trial to his active and independent spirit. To a Christian friend, on his first visit, he said: 'For the last three or four years, it has been my prayer, and I believe it was my earnest desire, to glorify God; but when this trouble came upon me, I felt as if it was not the way I desired to glorify him. But it has been teaching me patience and resignation, and I now begin to find that God's way is the right way, and I desire willingly to submit to his way.' And it was instructive and affecting to see how the sanctifying process went on, till the sturdy, self-reliant nature had become a weaned child.

"Yes, what a blessing to know the Saviour! That knowledge was the blessing of this brave old seaman. His latter days were very lonely; his sufferings were sometimes intense; and his temperament was never impulsive or emotional: but amidst all the outward dreariness and bodily distress, his mind was often filled with a joy un-

speakable. 'O the condescension of that blessed Saviour!' as he exclaimed one of the last times we saw him; "'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me.'" To think that he should wish to share his own heaven with us sinful worms! And then he repeated—

'The Lamb which dwells amidst the throne
Shall o'er them still preside;
Feed them with nourishment divine,
And all their footsteps guide.'

"This was the theme to which his thoughts seemed to fly spontaneously, and on which he loved to hear others enlarging. 'O speak to me of Christ,' he would sometimes say to his visitors, when the conversation grew general; 'speak to me of the love of Christ. It is Christian conversation I want.'

"He died at 4, Bond-street, Pentonville, January 14th, 1856, aged sixty-eight, and his remains are interred in Highgate Cemetery.—At the time of the Niger Expedition, Captain Cook accompanied it as Civil Commissioner; and the last years of his life he filled the post of London agent to the Scottish Equitable Insurance Society.*

ANSWER TO THE HISTORICAL ENIGMA,

NO. VII.

POMPEY.—1. Pizarro; 2. Octavius (called also Augustus Cæsar); 3. Magellan; 4. Percy (Hotspur), slain in the battle of Shrewsbury; 5. Edward I; 6. Young (Dr.)

GEOGRAPHICAL ENIGMA,

NO. VIII.

AN insignificant town in central Europe, which has been the scene of two memorable battles. The first was fought in defence of religious liberty, and victory favoured the cause of truth; but its champion was killed in the action. The second formed another bloody step in the ladder of victories, by which the most ruthless and ambitious of conquerors climbed above the greatest potentates in Europe.

(The enigma may be solved by identifying the subjoined characters, whose initials supply the successive letters of the person's name.)

1. The ancient name of Paris.
2. A town in Holland, noted for a treaty which put an end to a long and bloody continental war, in which England gained many victories, but no solid advantages.
3. A town of Asia Minor, which at one time rivalled Athens in grandeur, wealth, and literature; the birthplace of an apostle.
4. An island famous for currants.
5. A town, in the monastery of which Luther first studied the Bible, and discovered the errors of Popery.
6. A town in England, where died one of our worst kings, but greatest benefactors.

* How mysteriously the purposes of Providence work! A few evenings ago we were impressed and delighted by an address from a most energetic and zealous Christian layman. It added to our interest, on perusing the above article, to know that he had, as an infant, been one of the rescued from the "Duchess of Kent."